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- 1 The present volume is a collection of 16 essays dealing with the place, the boundaries and the significance of indigenous knowledge in the contemporary world. In addition to these articles are 1) a foreword signed by an eminent Indian philosopher and feminist, Vandha Shiva; 2) a preface by the three directors, who describe individually their family and cultural background, as well as the reasons why they are interested in this problematic; and 3) an introduction by the same directors.
- 2 The book offers different perspectives on the definition of indigenous knowledge through the diversity of geographical fieldworks. The authors take their examples and test their hypothesis from these fieldworks. The volume is divided in four sections, each composed of four articles. Marlene Bratt Castellano's is among the articles in the first section. She focuses on the source and the categorization of indigenous knowledge among the Canadian Nation's First Peoples. Thus, Castellano demonstrates that the "knowledge valued" by these groups stems from three sources: tradition, empirical observation or revelation. Knowledge is thus called traditional when it is provided by elders to young people. This form of knowledge is proteiform. It includes tales on the origin of the world as well as of the clan. It is also considered as the archives of battles and treatises experienced by the group. The second form of knowledge, the empirical, refers to the meanings the group or the individual possesses through observation. The third form of knowledge, revealed knowledge, is provided to the individual or the clan through dreams, intuitions and vision labeled spiritual by the group.

- 3 The aforementioned text is followed by Njoki Nathani Wane's article whose research was conducted in rural Kenya. In the opening of her essay, Wane underlines a disturbing anecdote which reveals that even indigenous people, isolated more than the rest of their countrymen from modernization, are prone to believe that there isn't any knowledge without schooling, in the western sense. This mental attitude questions the African traditional belief that associates knowledge with age. Regarding such a position, as well as her parents and vicinity's position stressing the dependant link between knowledge and education, the author affirms that indigenous knowledge has become peripheral, even among its holders.
- 4 Nonetheless, Nathani Wane's purpose in this article is to demonstrate that knowledge production is not only for academics but also for the lay person, since it is acquired through daily experience. In order to accomplish this goal, she lived almost daily among the rural Kenyan women whom she interviewed about their traditional way of life. Through this participant observation, the author ends up discovering the complexity of knowledge acquisition and its preservation. Knowledge acquisition among these Kenyan women, she explains, revolves largely around discipline, health and healing.
- 5 The second section of this volume opens with an article by Elisabeth McIsaac on the function of indigenous knowledge in the resistance against colonialism and the western discourse. McIsaac's examples are derived from her fieldwork among the Inuit community on Southern Baffin Island.
- 6 Following McIsaac, Patience Elabor-Idemudia, focusing on African identity, demonstrates how the inculcation of the knowledge of African folkways during childhood contributes to the resistance of external forces in later life. For her, Africans have been aware of their identity thanks to their exposure to this popular knowledge.
- 7 An article by Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg also appears in the same section of this volume. Taking a feminist perspective, this article criticizes the biomedical/ technological approach of healing which marginalizes a large part of indigenous knowledge on healing. D. Goldin Rosenberg fustigates the Cartesian thought which posits a separation between mind and body, by arguing that such a view has led to an excessive emphasis on medical technology. She further affirms that this technology is suffocating any other kind of knowledge on healing (be it the one possessed by indigenous peoples, or by women). In addition, this text underscores another interesting idea, which is that there exists a common condition shared by Nature and Woman. The author argues, indeed, that since the Enlightenment, both nature and Woman have been exploited and controlled through a patriarchal management of the World.
- 8 The third section of the volume is composed of essays dealing specifically with the link between indigenous knowledge and the Academy. The first article of this section, written by Joseph Couture, explores the evolution of the institutionalized Native Studies within the Canadian Academy as well as the problems faced by this discipline. This same section includes an interesting article by Handel Kadhope Wright, which deals with the utilitarian conception of development which prevails inside the Academy wherein economics and other social sciences are exclusively considered as disciplines capable to help foster development. With this line of thought, this author strives to demonstrate, on the path of Chinua Achebe, that literature studies too, although never mentioned, can contribute substantially to the development process in Africa.

- 9 This volume concludes with a fourth section composed, among three other articles, of Budd L. Hall's text. This paper is a sort of engaged manifesto which calls upon academics -- who are playing the role of legitimators of knowledge -- to create theoretical, physical and cultural spaces to deal with the past and the present of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, to historically rehabilitate this people. The author presents and analyzes, thus, the content of a cd-rom created by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, which he recommends to educators, academics and average citizens willing to learn and understand the ideas and the world view of aboriginal peoples.